

2011 Differentiated Instruction Institute:
 "Just Right—Right Now"—Across the Spectrum
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Assessment in a Differentiated Classroom



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The Differentiated Classroom



That students differ may be inconvenient, but it is inescapable. Adapting to that diversity is the inevitable price of productivity, high standards, and fairness to the students."

TheodoreSizer

10 Ways to Differentiate Instruction

Do I Differentiate using...	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1. ...assessment data				
a. interest surveys				
b. learning style inventories				
c. brain-compatible indicators				
d. skill competency checklists				
e. pre- and post-test results				
2. ...the content level of the material				
a. different levels of textbooks				
b. different levels of resource materials				
c. textbooks on audio				
d. interactive, student-directed instruction				
e. first person accounts				
3. ...a variety of resources				
a. peer and volunteer resources				
b. library books and reference materials				
c. primary documents				
d. computers				
e. use of internet technologies				

Does tracking make a difference?

What students say about what they learned in class:

"How to express myself in writing and being able to compose different thoughts in a logical manner; this is also a class where I may express my Creativity."

High-track English
Senior high

"To be a better listener in class."

Low-track English
Senior high

Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality, Jeannie Oakes, 1985

"To understand concepts and ideas and experiment with them. Also, to work independently."

High Track Science Senior High

"I have learned that I should do my questions for the book when he asks me to."

Low-track Science Senior high

"If think the most important thing I've done in this class is to exercise my brain. To work out problems logically so I can learn to work out problems later in life logically."

High-track math Senior high

"To learn to listen and follow the directions of the teacher."

Low-track Math—Senior High

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Differentiation means teachers....

design instruction for all learners (Title I)

take into account achievement levels, experiences and interest of students;

engage learners in activities that stimulate thinking and help them make connections to prior knowledge;

and, assess students daily using a variety of assessment tools.



10 Tiered Instruction Targets

	I'm there!	I'm making good progress.	I'm trying to move in that direction
1. I identify the essential understandings that I want students to know.			
2. If you asked the students in my class, they would be able to tell you the goals of what I am teaching.			
3. I pre-assess my students to determine strengths and needs.			
4. I plan the final assessment before designing the instruction.			
5. I use assessment to help determine student groupings.			
6. I arrange my groups flexibly; they may vary daily.			
7. I design interesting and relevant lessons to hook and engage the learner.			
8. I create tasks with difficulty and skill levels that are slightly above students' levels.			
9. I begin by first determining on-level tasks that meet the essential understandings, and then I scaffold up or down for students as needed.			
10. I adjust the complexity, support, pace, materials, and/or directions to meet the needs of learners.			

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Literacy, Learning, and Differentiation



Assessment 101

Know Instructional Reading Levels

Regardless of how students are assessed, having a fix on the level at which a student reads text independently, as well as his or her instructional reading level will allow you to secure the materials necessary to differentiate instruction for your particular group.



Seven key reading strategies that thoughtful readers use, outlined by Pearson et al (1992), are intended to assist the reader in comprehending and thinking critically about a text. These seven "tools" should be taught and practiced until they become part of the learner's repertoire:

Activating background knowledge to make connections between new and known information—How does what I know connect to what I am about to learn?

Questioning the text—Do I agree, disagree, have more questions?

Drawing inferences—What will happen next?

Determining importance—Which portion of the text should I remember?

Creating mental images—How can I improve comprehension by tapping into visual memory systems?

Repairing understanding when meaning breaks down—I don't understand, so what "fix-it" strategy should I use?

Synthesizing information—How can I combine everything I've learned for greater meaning—connecting, questioning, and inferring to better understand?

A Word About Independent Reading

- **Students with the best vocabulary are readers**
(Anderson and Freebody, 1983).
- **Good readers read about 1 million words a year**
(Nagy & Anderson, 1984).
- **Students' vocabulary knowledge is not comprised of word definitions; rather it is a series of connected concepts that have been stored after each encounter with a word**
(Beck et al., 2002; Spencer & Guillaume, 2006).

So ...traditional vocabulary assignments in which students look up a word in the dictionary or copy a list of words and their definitions from the chalkboard are ineffective. Vocabulary lists do not help students absorb a word to the point at which they can think with it and use it in discussion and writing; **wide-range reading does.**

(Graves, 2006; Michaels, 2001)

Source: Robb, Laura, Differentiated Reading Instruction, 2008

Divergent Questioning Strategies

Fluency

Flexibility

Originality

Elaboration

Is fluency always related to reading?



In what ways is this picture like...

- Keeping up with homework.
- Global warming
- The South (or North) in the Civil War
- The three branches of government
- Dimmesdale or Prynne in *The Scarlet Letter*.



Know your learners: Assess and Scaffold to meet Students' Needs

- Focus on assessment for learning
- Use a range of assessments
- Build in self-assessment by students
- Track results

Framework of Assessment Approaches and Methods

Selected-Response Format	Constructed-Response Format			
	Brief Constructed Response	Performance-Based Assessment		
		Product	Performance	Process-Focused Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple-choice <input type="checkbox"/> True-false <input type="checkbox"/> Matching <input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced multiple choice	<input type="checkbox"/> Fill in the blank • word(s) • phrase(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Short answer • sentence(s) • paragraph <input type="checkbox"/> Label a diagram <input type="checkbox"/> "Show your work" <input type="checkbox"/> Visual representation • Web • Concept map • Flow chart • Graph/table • Illustration	<input type="checkbox"/> Essay <input type="checkbox"/> Research paper <input type="checkbox"/> Story/play <input type="checkbox"/> Poem <input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio <input type="checkbox"/> Interactive notebook <input type="checkbox"/> Art exhibit <input type="checkbox"/> Science project <input type="checkbox"/> Model <input type="checkbox"/> Video/audiotape <input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheet <input type="checkbox"/> Lab report	<input type="checkbox"/> Oral presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Dance/movement <input type="checkbox"/> Science lab demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> Athletic skills performance <input type="checkbox"/> Dramatic reading <input type="checkbox"/> Enactment <input type="checkbox"/> Musical recital <input type="checkbox"/> Technology applications <input type="checkbox"/> Teach a lesson	<input type="checkbox"/> Oral questioning <input type="checkbox"/> Observation "kid watching" <input type="checkbox"/> Interview <input type="checkbox"/> Conference <input type="checkbox"/> Process description <input type="checkbox"/> "Think aloud" <input type="checkbox"/> Learning log

Source: Assessing Learning in the Classroom, NEA by Jay McGighe and Stephen Ferrara

Adaptations in italics end box

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Teacher Self-Checklist for Differentiation of Content

Teacher Self-Checklist for Differentiation of Content	Notes to Self
What is the content that I am to teach for this lesson or unit?	
What does the learning target tell me that students need to know and be able to do?	
Which information is most essential to the learner?	
What are the big ideas of this lesson or unit?	
What are the key vocabulary terms that students must learn?	
Are the vocabulary terms part of each student's existing background knowledge or will I need to build this understanding for all or a portion of the class?	
If a portion, which students will need to have additional support to acquire content vocabulary?	
How will I determine what my students know already so I can build upon (scaffold) their learning?	
Can related content be brought in to expand thinking and provide enrichment for students who move ahead quickly?	p. 54

Determine Entry Points for students

Student Scaffolding Readiness Scale

Student: _____ Teacher: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Category	Degree of Readiness									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Background Knowledge										
• Familiarity with the content	Unfamiliar									Very familiar
• Related background knowledge	Limited or none									Substantial experience
• Vocabulary	Mostly unfamiliar									Strong grasp of essential and related vocabulary
• Reading Level	Two or more years below									Confidently above level
Evidence of Higher Order Thinking										
• Capacity to handle choice with task	Needs guidance									Performs without direction
• Complexity of thinking	Knowing Understanding Applying									Analyzing Evaluating Creating
• Facility with abstract material	Initially needs concrete, tangible evidence									Works well with abstract examples

pages 29, 30, 138

Class summaries of strengths and weaknesses supports differentiation

Student Scaffolding Readiness Scale Summary

(1, 2, 3 = Areas to be Developed are noted as "D"; 8, 9, 10 = Areas of Strength are noted as "S")

Teacher: _____ Grade: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____ Content: _____

Plate Tectonics Unit

Category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Background Knowledge										
• Familiarity with the content	S	D							S	D
• Related background knowledge			D						S	D
• Vocabulary	S	D							S	D
• Reading Level	S	D							S	D
Evidence of Higher Order Thinking										
• Capacity to handle choice with task									S	D
• Complexity of thinking									S	D
• Facility with abstract material	S	D							S	D

Differentiating by Process

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
<p>The emphasis is on connecting to background knowledge and clarifying vocabulary terms using many visual prompts.</p> <p>Numerous non-fiction materials at instructional reading levels are provided with strong teacher coaching.</p>	<p>The emphasis is on building on existing knowledge of plate tectonics. Non-fiction materials at a range of levels are provided. The teacher models thinking and sets up tasks that reinforce the content. The teacher coaches and monitors progress of students.</p>	<p>The emphasis is on providing numerous resources that affirm and enhance basic knowledge. A range of tasks that build connections are provided with student choices built in.</p> <p>Students may work independently or with a partner. The teacher serves as a resource.</p>	<p>The emphasis is on broadening access to resources at multi-levels and expanding vocabulary and connections.</p> <p>Students define and identify real-life topics to be explored and work with a partner or small group. The teacher serves as a resource.</p>
<p>Caleb India Reggie</p> <p>Stanley Yancy</p>	<p>Brian Dawson Judeal</p> <p>Gail Harper Ellie</p>	<p>Carrie Fran Jeremy Montana</p> <p>Lauren Paul Valerie Will</p>	<p>Angie Noelle Serene Zeb</p> <p>Thomas Robbie Freddie</p>

Elements of Scaffolding

6th grade: Topic – AMERICAN REVOLUTION: The student will demonstrate knowledge of the causes and results of the American Revolution by identifying the issues of dissatisfaction that led to the American Revolution and identifying how political ideas shaped the revolutionary movement in America.

Title	Publisher	Fountas/ Pinnell Level
<i>Sam the Minuteman</i>	Harper/Trophy	Level J
<i>Revolutionary War on Wednesday</i>	Random House	Level M
<i>Redcoats and Petticoats</i>	Hampton-Brown	Level P
<i>If You Lived at the Time of the American Revolution</i>	Scholastic	Level Q
<i>A Time Line of the American Revolution</i>	Rosen	Level R
<i>The Start of the American Revolutionary War: Paul Revere Rides at Midnight</i>	Rosen	Level S
<i>The American Revolution</i>	Random House	Level T
<i>George vs. George: The American Revolution as Seen from Both Sides</i>	National Geographic	Level U
<i>Revolution!</i>	Houghton Mifflin	Level V
<i>Fight for Freedom: The American Revolutionary War</i>	Scholastic	Level X

Differentiating with Varying levels of text on the same topic:

Looking at Clouds – Level L

Weather Words – Level R

Stormy Weather – Level N

And Now for the Weather! – Level S/T



Differentiate
for Struggling
Learners while
Building
Thinkers...



Establish clear "LOOK FORs"

Students perform at their highest levels when they are very clear about expectations. Criteria lists or "look fors" for class work and projects guide students and serve as tools for self-monitoring.



Involve Students as Partners in Learning

1. Work with students to ensure relevance of content
2. Survey interest areas
3. Complete "I Can" Self-Assessments
4. Journal about "What Works/What Doesn't" in class
5. Involve students in creating assessments/tests to be used for a grade

Dear students:

I want to get your input about how this class has gone for you. I will use your response to help me prepare for the new year. Please answer the questions below. You will NOT need to write much.

**Students are our clients.
Ask them what they think.**

Following:

- self-assessment
- "look fors" that detail what is expected
- independent study
- partner projects

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Student Writers Workshop Look Fors

Student's Writers Workshop Look Fors

I know my audience for writing.	😊	😞
I write for different reasons.	😊	😞
I talk to a friend or a teacher to help me with my ideas.	😊	😞
I edit my writing to make it more readable.	😊	😞
I use rich vocabulary when I write.	😊	😞

Students work in pairs to identify ten key facts of the American revolution. As a group, the teacher and students compile the ten most important facts/concepts. These items are the Look Fors that must be evident in the project on the same time period.

Self-Assessment on the Build-It 3D Unit

Skills in Build It-3D	Very Confident	Somewhat Confident	Still Need Help
1. I can use a protractor.			
2. I can find the sum of angles of triangles and quadrilaterals.			
3. I can explain when and why shapes are congruent.			
4. I can sort triangles and quadrilaterals.			
5. I can name 2D figures from drawings.			

Self-Assessment for Teachers

Is your assessment on target for students?

An Assessment Checklist

Directions: Use the indicators below to evaluate the project, paper, product, or test that you are using to measure what students have learned.

Indicator	Yes	No	What Change is Needed?
Alignment			
1. Is the assessment authentic, including real-life connections and big ideas that demonstrate a depth of understanding?			
2. Does the assessment include specific vocabulary related to the content?			
3. Does the assessment align with the look fors or criteria lists that were provided to students?			
4. Does the method of assessing align with the verb, i.e., compare/contrast, analyze, as well as, the level of thinking implied by the standard that is being assessed?			
Thinking Skills			
5. Does the assessment or product students complete reflect a range of complexity in thinking?			

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e. first person accounts				
3. ...a variety of resources				
a. peer and volunteer resources				
b. library books and reference materials				
c. primary documents				
d. computers				
e. use of internet technologies				



The bottom line
is we must be
intentional about
differentiating
instruction for
struggling learners.